

# **White Water to Blue Water**

## **Newsletter**

### **June 2003**

#### **Introduction**

Dear White Water to Blue Water Participant:

On behalf of the Steering Committee for the White Water to Blue Water Initiative (hereinafter White Water to Blue Water, or WW2BW), we are happy to introduce the “White Water to Blue Water Newsletter,” a monthly update on the status and activities of the WW2BW Partnership Initiative. This newsletter is being sent to a wide spectrum of interested participants: National Focal Points, WW2BW partners, members of the initiative Steering Committee, civil society organizations and other stakeholders of the Wider Caribbean Region, and individual supporters of the goals and objectives of the initiative. We hope to distribute new issues of the newsletter monthly.

#### **WW2BW Background**

Announced at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable in September 2002, WW2BW first received the endorsement of the member governments of the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) at the May 2002 Inter-Governmental Meeting in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Since then, regularly scheduled CEP meetings have received updates on the initiative. An international Steering Committee (see WW2BW Leadership at <http://www.international.noaa.gov/ww2bw> for a list of its members), made up of representatives of governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities and the private sector has been formed to guide the development of the initiative.

One of the main duties of this Steering Committee is to organize a regional partnership conference, which will be held March 21-27, 2004, at the Hyatt Regency Miami hotel. This conference, which will focus on networking and the creation of public-private partnerships, is designed to bring together national delegations of 5-6 persons from diverse ministries such as Fisheries, Education, Finance, Health, Agriculture, Planning and Tourism to address national and regional needs in watershed and marine ecosystem management and to include, where appropriate, representatives from civil society and the private sector. In the next few months, the Steering Committee will begin to communicate with National Focal Points regarding the make-up and priorities of national delegations, which we have named national “Country Teams” to emphasize their cross-sectoral nature. The Steering Committee has already identified funding for the participation of three persons per Country Team, and will continue over the coming months to seek further sources of funding.

We anticipate 400 conference participants, and welcome the participation of non-governmental organizations and the private sector. In the very near future, we expect to have up and running a website for the Miami conference hosted by the University of Miami, which will include registration information and general information for use by all stakeholders, the public and the media. In the meantime, conference updates, including the website’s Internet address, will be provided via this monthly newsletter.

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### **Newsletter**

### **June 2003**

Documents which explain the objectives of the White Water to Blue Water initiative and Miami conference can be found at the WW2BW website hosted by NOAA (<http://www.international.noaa.gov/ww2bw>). You will also find a list of current Steering Committee members, as well as the leadership list for the sub-committees charged with organizing the conference. You will also find a copy of the latest conference agenda that illustrates the structure of the conference. The conference will not result in a negotiated text or “Miami Declaration;” rather, it is designed to address management issues and gaps from a cross-sectoral point of view and to result in the development of better communications, capacity and use of existing and potential resources on the national and regional levels. Interested governments, organizations and individuals are encouraged to contact any of the Steering Committee members and/or leaders of conference sub-committees. The Steering Committee is committed to the broadest possible participation in the White Water to Blue Water process, and your questions, comments and expression of interest in participation are encouraged and desired. You are also most welcome to contact the following Steering Committee members:

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U.S. Department of State  
202-647-3879; Fax: 202-647-9099  
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### **International Visitor Team Update**

The “International Visitor Team” (IVT) consultation process is designed to introduce the White Water to Blue Water Initiative at the national level within each country of the region, identify key national areas of concern, obtain feedback on the goals and objectives of WW2BW and the Miami conference, and assist countries with preparations for the March 2004 conference. A typical IVT visit includes a series of meetings between 3-4 members of the WW2BW Steering Committee and national stakeholders from the government, civil society and private sector. These meetings provide an opportunity for the WW2BW Steering Committee to explain the objectives and activities of the Initiative to local stakeholders and to identify National Focal Points for future coordination and communication with the Steering Committee.

To date, IVTs have been conducted in Barbados, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Grenada, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Nicaragua, Guyana, Aruba, the Netherlands Antilles (Curacao and Bonaire), Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Panama. In the coming two months, we expect to carry out IVT missions to Trinidad and Tobago, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

The White Water to Blue Water Steering Committee is committed to completing IVT consultations visits throughout the Wider Caribbean by October-November 2003.

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WW2BW Presentations have also been made at the United Nations, to the CARICOM Ministers for Trade and Economic Development, during the recent CEP LBS ISTAC and SPAW STAC meetings, and at various other international conferences and meetings of experts.

Once an IVT mission has been completed in a country, the WW2BW Steering Committee will maintain frequent communications with the National Focal Points identified by the government of that country. Most contact will be carried out by email, however there is the possibility of conducting follow-up communications via digital videoconference, as necessary.

The IVT visits to date have resulted in the identification of key recommendations, such as:

1. Development of a public awareness outreach program and press mechanism at the local level.
2. Development of a database of donor and grant programs for the region.
3. Creation of research and scientific cooperation standards for the region.
4. The need for focus on NGO capacity building efforts at the local level.
5. Community-based projects activities should be included as a priority, and should include pilot projects to be used to obtain buy-in from national and donor decision-makers for larger projects.

### **Partnerships Update**

The partnership subcommittee has begun to develop a list of potential partnerships for consideration by the National Focal Points. An illustrative list of potential partnerships will be provided to allow national Country Teams to begin considering their own priorities and desires for implementation projects. Look for more information on WW2BW Partnerships in next month's Newsletter.

### **Available Documents**

We have finished creating basic documents on the WW2BW initiative. On the NOAA-hosted website (<http://www.international.noaa.gov/ww2bw>), you will find:

- A 2-page flyer (available in English, Spanish, or French)
- Steering Committee Membership List
- Conference Subcommittee Leadership List
- The latest Conference draft Agenda

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In the next Newsletter...

- IVT Visit Updates
- More Conference Information
- Partnership information, including an illustrative list of WW2BW partnerships
- And more!